
By: Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Economy
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To: Economic Development Cabinet Committee – 6th March 2013

Subject: Economic Development Unit 2013/14 Business Plan

Summary:

In January 2013, Members of Economic Development Cabinet Committee were asked to consider and comment on the Economic Development Unit's 2013/14 draft business plan. At the meeting, Members requested a further report be submitted to the 6th March giving more detail on how performance indicator figures had been determined and for the final business plan to strengthen cross-cutting activity links to other Directorates. The final business plan will be approved Cabinet to on 18th March.

Economic Development Cabinet Committee is asked COMMENT on the proposed approach to assessing and reporting performance indicators and NOTE the areas of cross-cutting activity identified in paragraph 3.2.

1. Introduction

1.1 In November 2012, the Economic Development Cabinet Committee discussed and commented on high-level headline priorities for the Economic Development and Spatial Unit. This feedback was reflected in the early substantive draft plan considered by Members of the Committee in January 2013.

1.2 At the meeting in January, Members requested a progress report be submitted to the 6th March meeting. In particular, Members requested information on how performance indicator figures had been determined and for links to other Directorates to be strengthened

2. Performance Management

2.1 In the 2011/12 business plan, the Unit made a commitment to review and develop its methodology to measure the impact of its activity on job creation and support to businesses. As part of the business planning process, project managers were required to provide information for:

- Jobs created/safeguarded

- Businesses supported/assisted
- Financial leverage

- 2.2 KCC's data quality framework requires performance indicators to be focused to ensure meaningful management information is developed to support quarterly performance reports to Cabinet Committees; therefore alongside work to collect the information for the indicators listed in paragraph 2.1 above, we have developed definitions for each indicator including suggested evidence to support reported performance and also a framework for collecting and checking information. Indicators for business support have not been included in the 2013/14 business plan as it was decided that alongside a count of businesses, it will be more meaningful to assess the tangible benefit of the support received. The intention is to take this work forward in 2013/14 with assistance from Research and Intelligence Unit.
- 2.3. The nature of partnership working means that different agencies will be involved in delivering the same projects, for example, Locate in Kent and Expansion East Kent and whilst the nature of the interventions will differ, the challenge is to recognise the legitimacy of each intervention whilst avoiding double-counting of outputs.
- 2.4 In determining performance indicators in the business plan, a discounting factor has been applied equivalent to 40% based on total numbers from current project plans. Financial leverage is calculated on the basis of forecast direct external cash funding secured to deliver individual project outputs, for example, 2013-14 draw down of TIGER Regional Growth Fund funding grant. This does not include private sector match funding linked to projects, which will be secured in addition to the amounts shown in the performance indicator table. Figures, for jobs and financial leverage have been weighted towards the end period of the business plan to reflect the lead in time to verify outputs and to draw down external funding. These assumptions will be monitored during the year and where appropriate figures adjusted based on monitoring returns and reported to Members.
- 2.5 Project managers will be accountable for reporting and supporting evidence requirements. The intention is to capture information using a simple proforma that will record details of performance outputs against businesses assisted. Business data recorded will be; company name, address, location and employment sector. Once collated, the data can be analysed to identify businesses that have benefitted from multiple interventions; and over time, the number of "repeat" and "new" businesses assisted.
- 2.5 Capturing business name/address details will enable sample Quality Assurance checks on submitted returns including those received from external agencies providing services on behalf of KCC.

3. Links to other Directorates

3.1 As part of the “one council” approach it is important to identify cross-cutting links across business plans to reduce duplication and to avoid working in silos. The final draft plan therefore includes a new section; Corporate Programmes. This section identifies how the Unit’s work links to KCC’s key transformational programmes and overarching strategies.

3.2 Key areas of cross-cutting activity include:

- Leading on the recommendations in the Kent Forum Housing Strategy to support vulnerable adults and children;
- working with businesses to identify skills needed for future jobs;
- working with Education to share leads and information from business engagement activities, ensure commonalities in sector priorities and promote KCC and partners’ plans and services. A good example of this is our joint work to help businesses understand their role to provide 280 guided hours training as part of Raising Participation Age;
- seeking to identify and provide work experience opportunities for “Looked After Children”;
- helping to deliver the Kent Environment Strategy through working with Kent’s Low Carbon Sector and;
- contributing to, and supporting implementation of key change programmes

4. Recommendation

4.1 The Economic Development Cabinet Committee is asked to:

- a) COMMENT on the proposed approach to assessing and reporting performance indicators
- b) NOTE the area of cross-cutting activity in paragraph 3.2 above,

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Background Documents:

None